

november rain by rebelkicks

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Summary:

AU in which they're all just normal kids trying to figure out life and high school and all the things in between.

[No monsters/powers.]

november rain

Author's Note:

So this is my first Stranger Things/Harringrove fic ever. I just love this world and these two and all the characters so much, so I thought it'd be cool to just write them as high school kids with normal, boring lives. Well, not boring, but boring by Stranger Things standards.

Billy's a dick here, but he's not going to be *as bad* as he was in the actual show.

Anyway. I hope at least one person out there like this, because I'm having a lot of fun writing it.

Title is, obviously, from November Rain by Guns N' Roses, which I feel fits these two so well. <3

No beta so any and all mistakes are my own.

Steve fucking hated Monday's.

Monday's were cruel and ugly. They were the worst of the worst. This wasn't just because he had to wake up early after months of sleeping in until the late afternoon; no. His hatred for Monday's went a lot deeper than that. He hated Monday's because Jonathan and Nancy's makeout sessions in front of their lockers after so long of not seeing each other's faces (which was a lie, all three of them had went to the movies the day before) was horrible. No one should have to witness such PDA and honestly it's not the first time Steve's thought about asking someone to switch lockers with him. After a summer off, he had forgotten just how bad these two were during the school hours. He's not sure if he can take another year of this.

"Guys," he whines as he tries to get their attention again. Jonathan

looks over at him while still kissing Nancy and Steve has to look away from the intensity of it. "Can you get off of my locker? Seriously. You do this everytime!"

Finally, as if God himself has shined light upon them, they pull away from each other. They don't even try to look embarrassed and Steve tries to remember when that had been him with Nancy. He doesn't ever remember being that bad, but then again Nancy's love for him was nothing compared to the love she had for Jonathan and he knew that. It had been hard at first, but he'd had an entire summer and then some to get over it. People just don't work out sometimes and that was okay and besides, Jonathan was a cool guy. It had taken a while for Steve to warm up to him, but when he had seen how happy the other boy made Nancy, he couldn't hate him. All he had ever wanted was for Nancy to be happy, even if it wasn't with him. She had been his first love, but they were young. A part of him had always known it wouldn't last.

"You wouldn't complain if you would just ask out Tiffany already," Nancy says with a glare. He knows that it has to be a little weird that his ex girlfriend is trying to hook him up with another girl, but he's way past looking at things as weird between them. He's just accepted all of this. She's been trying to hook him up with Tiffany ever since they ran into her at a house party on the fourth of July. His feelings on this must show, because Nancy sighs out. "Oh, come on, Steve. Tiffany's nice! She's really pretty too."

Which yeah, both of those statements are true. Tiffany was sweet, sweeter than most girls in Hawkins. She was kind and funny and super smart. Hell, she even volunteered at the middle school to help tutor the kids there and she did it for *free*. And she was really pretty in a simple kind of way. She was the exact kind of girl that Steve would have once chased after without a second thought, but now? Now he *was* thinking and he just wasn't sure that was what he wanted.

Being with Nancy, as disastrous as it had been at times, had opened up his eyes. Steve had never been as bad as everyone thought he was. He knows what people say about him; he'd never had a serious girlfriend, he slept around, *he once had sex with a swimsuit model and now she was hung up on him*. It was absolutely ridiculous and none of it was true. Except the serious girlfriend part. Nancy was the first girl he had ever actually had a relationship with and she was only the third girl he'd ever had sex with. She had meant something, though. The entire relationship had meant something. It showed him that he wanted more out of this. He wanted love; cliché dates that people made fun of and really weird inside jokes that made other people sick. He wanted someone that was also his best friend. He just wanted love. For some reason, Tiffany Michaels didn't really seem like the person for that.

"I'm good," he says as he does his locker combination and tosses his backpack inside of it. "Besides, if I got a girlfriend, who would third wheel your dates?" He shuts the locker and looks back at his friends with a grin. Nancy rolls her eyes, but Jonathan actually looks deep in thought.

"Probably Will," he answers as if Steve had been genuine in his asking.

"Come on, I'm a lot cooler than Will," Steve says. Both Jonathan and Nancy share a look and then glance back over at Steve with a blank expression and he sighs out. "Okay, fine. I'm not. Whatever. You can't just lie and make a guy feel better, can you?"

"Will actually has good taste in music," Jonathan jokes.

"I have good taste in music!" Steve cries out, offended. "You said you liked that mixtape I made for you the other day!" Jonathan's lip twitches and Nancy hides her laughter behind her hand. "I spent so long on that. Wow, okay."

"Oh, come on," Jonathan laughs. "I liked it, you know I did. We're just joking with you." Steve must look more put out than he knows, because Jonathan smiles softly at him before throwing his arm around his shoulders. "You know we love when you third wheel our dates. Who else would gag everytime we kiss and then eat all our popcorn at the movies?"

Steve smiles. It's crazy just how close and comfortable he'd become with the two of them over the months. He thinks Jonathan might be the first real guy friend he's ever had. He'd had Tommy before, but this was different. Jonathan was different. He was genuine and Steve found himself wishing he'd befriended him a long time ago.

"Yeah," Nancy adds on as she glues herself to the right of him. "Friday night dates wouldn't be the same without you, Steve."

He thinks they might be lying, but he likes to imagine that they aren't. With a smile, he throws his arms around both of their necks and the three of them walk down the hall together.

* * *

The day goes by quickly enough. Steve has Lunch B this semester, which kind of sucks because he's starving and he still has one more period to go through before he can actually eat. He knows that his

day will seem shorter with this kind of schedule though, so he tries not to complain about it too much in his mind.

He has English right now with Mr. Walker and he makes sure to take a seat right in the middle since he's early for once. It's not like they have assigned seating, but it's kind of an unspoken rule that wherever you sit on the first day becomes your unofficial assigned seat for the rest of the year.

Steve likes sitting in the middle. It's not too close to the front and it's not way in the back where he won't be able to see anything. It's just right.

He pulls out a pen from his jeans and clicks it open as he stares down at the composition book on his desk. It was the one requirement they had for this class and he wasn't sure why, but he didn't really question it. He'd picked out a blue composition book this semester instead of the regular black and white one and he was feeling a little rebellious about it.

The class begins to fill up slowly and a few guys clap Steve on the shoulder in greeting while some girls smile at him and ask him how his summer was. He finds out soon enough that he has this class with Tommy. The other boy makes eye contact with him for less than two seconds before he's turning away and sitting as far away from Steve as possible. He tries his hardest not to roll his eyes.

His fallout with Tommy had been... interesting. Their friendship had always been a little rocky. Tommy was overbearing and judgemental on a lot of things. Steve had overlooked a lot of it until he'd gotten together with Nancy his sophomore year. Tommy was always making rude comments about Nancy and the both of them together and Steve

just couldn't take it. So one day he punched him and broke his nose. That had put enough of a dent in their friendship, but it wasn't until their junior year, when Jonathan and Nancy finally went public with *their* relationship, that Steve actually put the final nail in the coffin that was his friendship with Tommy. The other boy made a comment about Jonathan and his relationship with Nancy and for some reason it had pissed Steve off more than anything else ever had. And that was how he'd broken Tommy's nose the second time. Needless to say, things had been a little dead between the two of them lately.

He tries to ignore that, though. Mr. Walker struts in and he smiles at them warmly as the final bell rings.

"Good afternoon," he greets. "It's always nice to be back from summer break, isn't it?" The class lets out a collective groan, but he just laughs. He starts to go over the course outline for the semester and Steve zones out as he begins doodling in his composition book. He's never been a good drawer before, but he's pretty good at drawing robots and trees.

"So this year I want to do something a little different," Mr. Walker says loudly, bringing Steve back into the classroom. "It's your senior year and with that comes a lot of finality and realization. This is you growing up and leaving a lot of things behind. It'll probably be a year that you discover a lot of things about yourself, things you didn't know before. So, with that in mind, I want to do this." He pulls a notebook out of his desk and holds it out for the class to see. "Everyday, for the first ten minutes of class, you're going to write in the composition book that was required for this class. You can write anything you want: how your day's going, what your plans for the weekend are. Write a poem, write a story. You can write anything you want, but you *have* to write. Document this last year of high school and when you walk out of here at the end of the year, open it back up, read what you wrote. See how you've changed in these next few months."

A few people look excited about this little project and a few look a bit skeptical. Steve's with the latter. What the hell is he supposed to write? He doesn't live a very exciting life. He's also not sure how comfortable he feels with writing down his feeling or anything like that. What if someone got ahold of his book and read it? He doesn't think he'll be getting into details about anything anytime soon.

"So you basically want us to keep a diary?"

The entire classroom's attention snaps to the back of the room, Steve included, to see where the voice has come from. Sure enough, a boy sits slouched back in his desk like he doesn't have a care in the world. Long, curly blonde hair wraps around his face and Steve's never quite seen anything like it in person. He's definitely never seen *this* person before and he wonders how he could have missed him. Hawkins wasn't exactly a big place. Surely he would have heard news about a new student?

"Ah, Mr. Hargrove," Mr. Walker says lazily, "welcome to Hawkins and to answer your question, yes. If you would like to look at it as a diary then sure, be my guest. Either way, you write or you fail."

Hargrove looks like he's going to say something for a minute before he grins widely and that's when Steve notices that he's chewing on a toothpick. He's never actually seen anyone chew on a toothpick before besides his dad and he can't help but to stare a little longer. This turns out to be a bad idea, because the boy's eyes turn on him, a blue so icy that they unnerve him, and glares at Steve, making him whirl back around with pink cheeks. It's rude to stare, he knows this, and suddenly he feels bad. This guy is obviously new and if that alone doesn't suck enough, here Steve is staring at him like he's never

seen another human before.

“Alright,” Mr. Walker says, clapping his hands and rubbing them together. “Ten minutes start now! Write.”

Steve spends that entire ten minutes doodling his robots and trees.

He has lunch with Nancy and Jonathan which he counts as both a blessing and a curse. On one hand, it's nice to be able to eat with his best friends. On the other hand, he honest to God just witnessed Nancy hand feed Jonathan a grape so like... he supposes not everything can be without its downsides.

“How do you like your classes so far?” Nancy asks him as she takes a sip of her juice.

He shrugs. “They’re fine, I guess.” He thinks back to the class he just left and he twirls a french fry in his fingers absentmindedly. “Hey, did either of you guys see that new kid?”

“New kid?” Jonathan asks at the same time that Nancy says: “Billy?”

“Uh, I guess? I just know his last name is Hargrove.”

“Yeah, Billy,” she confirms. “He’s in my Advanced Calculus class. Seemed kind of quiet; didn’t really talk to anyone except for Stacey because she offered to be his partner. Why?”

“I dunno. He’s in my English class. I was just wondering, because I hadn’t seen him around before.”

Nancy nods and mumbles out an ‘okay’ and that’s that. The conversation is over. Except for some reason Steve doesn’t really want it to be over. He’s curious about this new guy; Billy Hargrove. Hawkins didn’t really get new students so this was kind of a big thing.

“Well,” Jonathan speaks up, voice gruff as he looks behind Steve’s back, “I don’t think you’ll have to worry about not seeing him around for much longer.” Steve gives him a curious look, but before any of them can say anything, there’s a loud whoop coming from the back entrance of the cafeteria.

Steve turns around and sure enough, Billy is standing right next to Tommy and his gang of merry men. Tommy has an arm thrown around the blonde’s shoulder and Steve wonders how the hell they became friends in literally one passing period. For someone Nancy deemed as quiet, he sure looks proud as he smirks at whatever the hell Tommy’s saying to him. One of the guys produces a basketball from out of nowhere and Steve watches on as he tosses it to Billy, who reaches out and catches it with amazing reflexes.

“Think he’ll join the team?” Nancy asks, head tilted at the sight in front of her.

"I hope not," Steve says and then he's shocked at himself afterwards. Why had he even said that? He didn't know this guy at all. Why did it matter to him whether or not he joined the team? He himself wasn't even sure if he wanted to play basketball this year. It had seemed so important to him once upon a time, but now with the reality of graduation and college around the corner, he wasn't sure if he had time to be focused on such insignificant things.

"Oh, I forgot to ask! Did you guys hear about Kasey's back to school party this weekend?"

Jonathan and Steve both groan at the exact same time and Nancy smirks at their reactions. Kasey Miller was notorious for her back to school parties. Before she started throwing them, her older brother Derek had been the host. People had been worried that when Derek graduated that the parties would die down. Little did they know that Kasey was probably just as crazy as he was. Steve had been to at least two parties that she had thrown and each time he woke up the next morning with no recollection of the previous night and with one of the worst hangovers ever. It wasn't exactly a good time.

"I say we go," Nancy announces like this is some kind of dictatorship and they follow blindly behind her -- which they do, but that's not the point here. "It's Steve's last year and that means we have to do all the traditions, no matter how lame they are or how much we'll regret them the next day."

She has a point. It is his last year. The thought both saddens him and scares him tremendously. He has no idea what the hell he's going to do once he walks across that stage in May. He hasn't applied to any schools, he hasn't even started looking, and he knows that graduation is still months away but Nancy's been looking at colleges since she was a sophomore. He feels a little behind here.

She must be able to see the underlying fear in his eyes, because she reaches across the table and squeezes his hand gently.

“This year doesn’t have to be all serious,” she tells him with a smile. “You deserve to have some fun, too. We can worry about the rest of it later.”

Later. It’s always later. The impending doom of later is haunting, but right now his best friends are smiling at him in comfort and he’s eating shitty cafeteria food and for right now, later seems a million years away.

“Okay,” he agrees. “Yeah. Let’s have some fun.”

Gym is a little awkward.

Tommy keeps looking at Steve from across the locker room as they change into their shorts and gray shirts. Steve doesn’t know if he’s glaring at him or trying to get his attention so he can talk to him, but either way he doesn’t make eye contact. That friendship is done with and he has no intentions of bringing it back to life.

It’s also a little awkward because the new kid has gym with him and he’s definitely not as quiet as Nancy thought he was. He’s loud as he

talks about something with Chuck Raymond. Steve tries not to pay attention but it's hard when the both of them are laughing and yelling random things to the other guys. It's incredible how this guy hasn't even been here for a full day and already he's managed to fit in perfectly well with every other jock here.

Coach walks in and all the guys quiet down, but Steve takes note of the smirk that's still on Billy Hargrove's face.

"We're going to do a bit of a scrimmage today," Coach speaks up as he looks down at his clipboard. "Got a few newcomers this year so we'll see where you guys fit in, if you do at all." He looks up at the guys and points at Steve and whoever's on the same side of the locker room with him. "This side will be shirts,-" he points to side of the locker room that has Billy and Tommy on it, "-this side will be skins. It's a one on one game. Hurry up and get out there!"

Steve finishes putting on his shoes before there's a tap on his shoulder. He turns around to see a short kid that he doesn't know.

"You're Steve Harrington, right?"

"Uh," he drags out as if this is some kind of trick question. "Yeah. Yeah, that's me."

"I'm Benny," the kid says with a smile and Steve notices the braces that sit on his teeth. "I'm a freshman. I used to come to the games though last year. You're a great player. Guess there's a reason you're captain, right?"

A blush creeps onto Steve's cheeks. He's never really known how to handle praise, even over something that he knows he's good at.

"Nice to meet you," Steve says as he holds his hand out for the kid to shake. "How you liking high school so far?"

"It's alright," Benny shrugs. "A little scary."

He remembers his first day of high school. It had been a bit intimidating, but he'd had Tommy and the guys and he'd made Varsity basketball his first year, so he never really had to worry about being the odd one out. He had always fit in. He'd surely never been a short kid with braces, that's for sure. For some reason, he finds himself feeling a little protective over Benny now. The kid's eyes look wide and excited and even though it's clear to see how nervous he is, Steve can also see the adrenaline that runs through him. It's nice.

"Well, it gets better," Steve promises as they walk through the locker room together. "You trying to make the team?"

"Yeah. I don't know if I'm any good, but I think it'd be nice to be a part of something, you know?"

Steve nods, because he does know. He'd always been a part of something, that's true, but he'd never actually felt like he belonged. Being friends with Nancy and Jonathan though, *that* made him feel like he was a part of something; even if it was just crashing their date nights. He was sure they'd probably be happy to have him gone next

year, but for now he was happy just tagging along and being a third wheel to them.

“Just don’t stand around looking lost,” Steve offers. “Coach hates that. Also, tell him that you like his shoelaces.” Benny gives him a weird look and Steve laughs. “Just trust me, okay?”

For as long as Steve had known him, Coach had had the same shoelaces. It didn’t matter which shoes he wore that day, the green and black striped shoelaces were always on them. He’d once told Steve that they were his lucky shoelaces. Steve wasn’t sure what kind of luck they brought him, but then again he’d never been into superstitions himself. Whatever worked, though.

When they all finally get out onto the court, Coach has them do a few warm up exercises and when they have to pair up, Steve pairs up with Benny. The kid doesn’t seem to really have any friends on the team and Steve isn’t about to leave him by himself. He knows how nerve wracking this kind of thing can be. It’s always nice to have someone on your side.

When they start the scrimmage, Steve does his best to show Coach that he *has* been working out this summer and that he didn’t just spend it lounging around eating junk food in front of his TV. He’s not sure if he’s able to show any of that though, because Billy fucking Hargrove is on his ass from the moment he gets the ball.

He doesn’t know what this guy’s deal is, but he’s about to knock the shit out of him if he doesn’t *back off*.

“Captain, huh?” Billy laughs as he hovers behind Steve. “You guys must suck more than I thought.”

“Shut up,” Steve barks as he dribbles the ball.

Billy laughs, it’s mean and ugly, and Steve doesn’t like it. It’s intimidating, which he’s sure is the point as it takes him off balance and Billy manages to get the ball out from under him before taking off down the court and shooting a three pointer. The guys cheer out as they clap him on the back and Steve clenches his jaw.

“Harrington!” Coach yells, clearly not knowing whether to be upset that his senior caption is complete shit or rejoice in the fact that this new kid is obviously *fucking amazing*. “Get your head out of your ass or I’m going to bench you!”

“You can’t bench me! It’s not even a real game,” Steve hollars back, annoyed, but Coach just glares at him.

Benny comes up next to him and offers him a nervous smile. Steve just returns it before standing up straight again and getting back into position on the court. Billy’s grinning at him as he dribbles the ball in place and Steve realizes that his teeth are so sharp, he almost looks feral.

“Come on, Captain,” Billy teases, low and dark. “You always play this badly?”

“You always talk this much while playing? Or do you ever actually shut up?”

His words seem to fuel Billy on as his smile grows wider. Steve reaches out to try and take the ball away, but Billy switches it from his right hand to his left and when Steve tries again, he dribbles it behind him, out of reach. It makes him want to scream in frustration. In fact, he’s just about to do that whenever he sees Benny come up from behind Billy and actually steal the ball away from him.

Billy’s eyes widen in confusion before he turns around and sees Benny standing there with a smile. Steve grins back at him, feeling a little proud. Benny takes no less than two steps down the court whenever Billy’s tacking on behind him. Steve watches as the blonde sticks his leg out and trips Benny, making the younger kid fall onto the ground face first.

No one pays attention to Benny as he falls down, but Steve runs back over to him.

“Hey!” He crouches down onto the floor and tries to lift the kid up. “Hey, you good? You okay? Come on, just walk it off.”

Benny looks up at him and Steve winces. His mouth is bleeding, the braces had obviously gotten caught onto his lips and Steve watches in horror as he pulls them apart. He can tell that Benny’s trying not to cry, but he sees the water pooling in his eyes and suddenly, Steve is furious. This is a kid! No one deserved to be tricked like that on the court, but especially not a kid on their first day of basketball tryouts.

Steve stands up and whirls around to where Billy is standing underneath the net, proud smile on his face as the guys congratulate him on another score.

“Hey!” Steve yells at him. “What the fuck is your problem?”

“Something wrong, Captain?” Billy asks as Steve approaches him. He has that stupid fucking smirk on his face and Steve knows that he knows what he did. What an asshole.

“That was a foul and you know it, asshole. What’s your issue?”

“I don’t know what you’re talking about.”

“I’m talking about you tripping that kid for no reason! Mad because you got shown up by a freshman? Guess you’re not as good as you thought you were, huh?”

Billy’s face grows red and Steve notices that his chest does as well. The blonde tosses the ball to the ground before he gets in Steve’s face.

“Not my fault the kid can’t keep up. With a captain like you, though? Can’t say I blame him.”

“What’s your fucking problem, man? You don’t even know me!” They’re chest to chest now and Steve knows that they’re getting a

crowd.

“I know you’re a bitch that can’t play basketball. I know you used to be someone big around here and now you’re just a has been. You’re nothing, Harrington.”

Before he knows what he’s doing, Steve shoves Billy backwards so hard that he goes flying to the ground. It’s quiet for about five seconds after that. Billy just looks at Steve with wide eyes like he hadn’t been expecting him to do that and everyone is completely still. Until Billy grins like an animal and then he stands up again, rolling his shoulders back.

For a minute Steve almost wants to apologize. He doesn’t just go around shoving people into the ground, he’s never been that kind of person. But then Billy’s fist is flying towards his face and Steve can’t even remember what he was thinking about.

One second he’s thinking about saying sorry and the next he’s on the ground and a burst of pain erupts throughout his face.

“What the hell is going on here?” Coach barks out. “I leave for five minutes and it turns into a caged match over here! What the hell, Harrington?” Of course. Of course *he’s* the one getting in trouble for this. “And why the hell is there a freshman bleeding on my gym floor? Get to the nurse’s office, both of you!”

Steve sits up and shakes his head. His lip is throbbing and when he touches a finger to it, he winces in pain as he brings his hand back, blood on his fingertips. Great. Just fucking great.

He stands up with the help of Benny, who now looks a hundred times better than Steve feels.

“Feel better, Captain,” Billy draws out behind them and Steve turns to see a smirk on his face. “Next time try not to talk while playing. You don’t seem to be so good at multitasking.”

“You shouldn’t have done anything,” Benny whispers to Steve. “It was fine.”

“No, it wasn’t. Bullies are never fine.”

The two of them walk out of the gym together, but not before Benny turns to Coach and says “I like your shoelaces’ on the way out. Steve gives him an incredulous look.

“Figured I better start sucking up since I started bleeding on his gym floor and all.”

The two of them laugh and Steve ignores the pain in his lip.

When he gets home later that night. His parents aren’t home, but there’s money on the counter for food. He orders a large pepperoni

pizza with extra olives and mushrooms and sits in front of the TV for the rest of the night with an ice pack on his lip.

All in all, it was a pretty good way to start his senior year.

One day down; only 179 left to go.

Author's Note:

If you liked it, let me know. :)

Please be nice, I'm so fragile and nervous about uploading this. Lol.